



# Making the Grade

## The Valley's 2004 Environmental Report Card



*The city of Phoenix earned top honors in Valley Forward's 2004 Environmental Report Card. Phoenix is the first city to receive straight "A's" for outstanding achievement in all five categories – Land Use, Open Space and Recreation, Transportation, Air Quality and Water Quality.*



# Phoenix's Commitment to Excellence

The city of Phoenix continues to receive recognition for efficiency and effectiveness. In 1993, we received the Carl Bertelsmann Prize for being one of the two best-run cities in the world. In March 1995, Phoenix received straight A's on *Financial World* magazine's "State of the Cities" study, and in February 2000, the city received the highest rating in *Governing* magazine's "Grading the Cities" report.

In 2001, the city of Phoenix was recognized as the nation's most efficiently run city. The report, published by the Reason Public Policy Institute (RPPI), was titled "Competitive Cities: A Report Card on Efficiency in Service Delivery in America's Largest Cities." The comprehensive national study measured how well 44 major U.S. cities deliver municipal government services. Overall, Phoenix ranked the highest.

The report researched the amount of money and employee work time required in providing various services, such as police protection, trash collection and street maintenance. According to the results, Phoenix achieves high efficiency in delivering five of the 11 city services studied. The Parks and Recreation and Library departments consistently received higher scores than peer departments in comparable cities. In addition, the RPPI Report distinguished Phoenix for developing the most understandable and useful information for its residents, which attests to the city's commitment to customer service.

In 2003, the city of Phoenix gained national recognition for its efforts in promoting cultural diversity. The National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC-LEO) and the National League of Cities selected Phoenix as the winner of the 2003 City Cultural Diversity Award for cities with a population greater than 400,000. The city was recognized for setting a strong example of how cities can improve and promote cultural diversity in their communities. More specifically, the 2003 NBC-LEO award recognized the work of the city's Diversity Task Force. This task force, made up of employees from all levels of the organization, worked for more than eight months to brainstorm diversity issues and discuss the barriers to building diversity, equity and fairness in the city organization. Their 77 recommendations have resulted in strengthened employee efforts to work as a team, and better awareness of how best to provide excellent service to our diverse community.

This year, the city has won national recognition as the most accessible friendly city for people with disabilities in the National Organization on Disability's Third Annual Accessible America Contest. Phoenix was recognized for its focus on disability issues and the successful design of programs, services and facilities that are accessible to residents and visitors who have disabilities.

In addition, the city also earned top honors in Valley Forward's 2004 Environmental Report Card by becoming the first city to receive straight "A's" for outstanding achievement in each of the

evaluated categories. This year's survey focused on five categories: Land Use, Open Space and Recreation, Transportation, Air Quality and Water Quality.

Despite the many accolades, we continue to look for new ways of improving operations and the quality of customer service delivered to internal and external customers. During the past year, city employees, work groups and departments were recognized for their hard work and dedication to safety and customer service. The city of Phoenix genuinely values its customers – internal and external.

## City of Phoenix Excellence Awards

Each year, the city of Phoenix recognizes employees with excellence awards for outstanding service. This past year, many of the excellence awards were presented for outstanding examples of dedication to safety and the enhancement of customer service.

- The Matthew Henson Relocation Team received an excellence award for their involvement in the Matthew Henson Hope VI Revitalization Project. One component of the project involved the relocation of all residents of the existing 372-unit Matthew Henson Public Housing Development. It was a sensitive and difficult task, but the team rose to the challenge. The team planned and coordinated the relocation effort to ensure that the affected residents would be treated humanely and with respect. In one case, team members even visited a hospitalized resident to assure him he needn't worry about his unit or relocation during his illness and rehabilitation.



- Members of the Daring Adventures Team were recognized for their efforts exposing teens and adults with disabilities to exciting recreational opportunities. The city's Adaptive Recreation Section successfully applied for a \$250,000 grant for the program, which brings excitement, fun and social opportunities to Phoenix residents regardless of previous experience or ability level. Daring Adventures offers adaptive cycling, adaptive kayaking, sled ice hockey, hiking/backpacking, and wilderness adventure camping, as well as a volunteer component. In the words of one participant, "it's the best program in the country!"
- Brandon Forrey of the Street Transportation Department received an excellence award for his role in gaining national acclaim for the city's School Safety Program. For example, Brandon organized Phoenix's participation in the 2003 International Walk to School Day that promoted student traffic safety. With the help of government partnerships, Brandon also organized the 2003 School Crossing Guard Training Program and has evaluated safety plans for numerous schools making travel to and from school safer for students. In addition, Brandon regularly provides information to officials in other states that are interested in modeling their system after the Phoenix School Safety Program.
- Darrell Smith of the Police Department was recognized for the integral role he has played in getting illegal firearms off the streets. Darrell has trained more than 600 officers on neighborhood projects, gun crime investigations, federal gun laws, officer safety and state-of-the-art ballistics computers. He has facilitated the prosecution of about 68 cases involving the Hell's Angels round-up and has been involved in the arrest of suspects trying to transport and distribute large quantities of drugs. Darrell has also coordinated the donation of 100 new Motorola Saber Radios for the Police Department. Darrell's charitable efforts include the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Special Olympics.



*This team from the Parks and Recreation Department's Adaptive Recreation Services section lead the effort to create the Daring Adventures program to bring excitement, fun and social opportunities to teens and adults with disabilities. Daring Adventures offers adaptive cycling, kayaking, sled ice hockey, hiking/backpacking and wilderness adventure camping.*

- Raymond Retiz received an excellence award for his efforts with the Stop Crime Remove Urban Blight Program administered by the Parks and Recreation Department's At-Risk Youth Division. Raymond has organized community service for troubled youths and taught them the value of commitment, the importance of having a strong work ethic and the need for follow through on assignments. Raymond's patience and understanding are extremely important and he has succeeded in helping these troubled youth see beyond their current circumstances and realize the importance of continuing education

or learning a skill so that they can change their path in life. Together, Raymond and the youth have contributed countless hours to food banks, neighborhood clean-ups, city projects and other community projects.

- The Learning Tree Plaza Team received an excellence award for their work with the students from the Arthur M. Hamilton Elementary School who were allowed to name and clean up a vacant parcel of land owned by the Arizona Department of Transportation. When the team learned that the student's hard work would be wiped out by a sewer main leading to the 23rd Avenue Wastewater

Treatment Plant, they made a commitment to work with the Hamilton students during the 18-month construction period to further the student's interest in landscaping and environment. The team arranged student tours of Phoenix nature sites; brought in a landscape architect to teach the children basic landscape design, and enlisted Desert Botanical Gardens staff to help the children recreate the plaza with wildlife, plants and gardens. The result is a lush outdoor classroom that was once an eyesore.



*Detective Darrell Smith has played an integral part in getting illegal firearms off the streets of Phoenix. In addition to playing a key role in the prosecution of nearly 70 cases involving illegal firearms in 2003, Det. Smith has trained more than 600 officers on neighborhood projects, gun crime investigations, federal gun laws, officer safety and state-of-the-art ballistics computers.*

## **We are Committed to Making Phoenix Better**

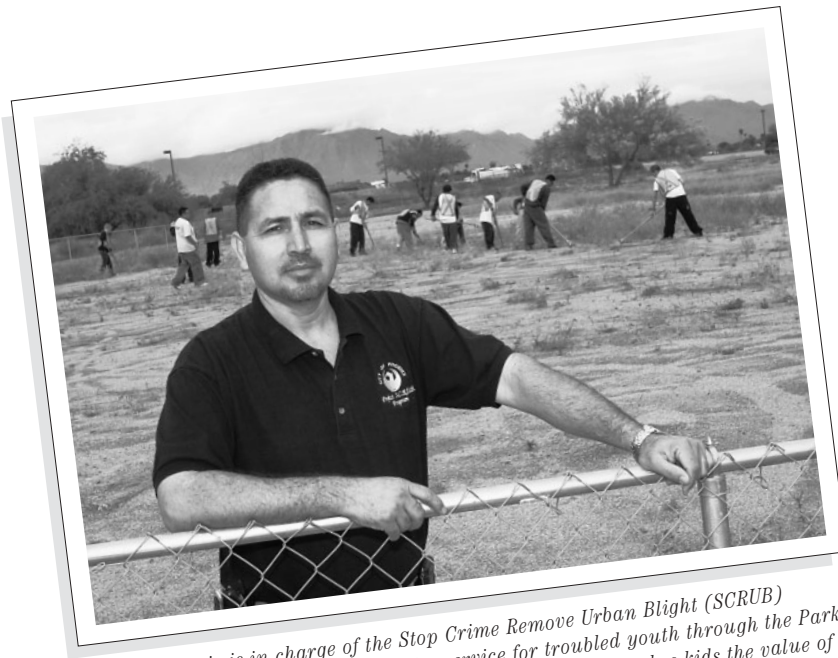
At the city of Phoenix, our mission is to provide excellent customer service. Although we have faced some challenging budget times over the past several years, our employees have continued to deliver quality services to our community and strive to make Phoenix better in everything we do. And we know that you, the residents of Phoenix, expect that of us.

Phoenix is one of the best-run cities in the world because our employees are leaders in their professions with commitment, passion and a strong work ethic. The core values of our organization – what we call our “Vision and Values” – are at the root of everything we do.

- We are dedicated to serving our customers.
- We value and respect diversity.
- We work as a team.
- We each do all we can.
- We learn, change and improve.
- We focus on results.
- We work with integrity.
- We make Phoenix better!

Here are just some of our recent accomplishments that make Phoenix a better place to live, work and play:

- Last year, the Police Department saw a 54 percent decrease in police-involved shootings and 31 percent decrease in fatal police shootings. This is the lowest number of shootings since 1990. Also according to Police Department statistics, both violent and property crime rates have decreased compared to the same time last year.
- The city now offers the ability to pay monthly city utility bills and parking tickets online. So far, the city has received more than \$5 million in electronic payments.
- In an effort to reduce red light traffic collisions, the city installed red light cameras at 10 intersections that had the highest traffic fatality rates where the number one cause of collisions was red light running. The result was a 48 percent reduction of deaths and a 26 percent reduction in red light collisions.
- The waiting time at Family Service Centers has been reduced from an average lead time of more than 50 days to same-day service for the majority of people who request services.



*Raymond Retiz is in charge of the Stop Crime Remove Urban Blight (SCRUB) Program, which organizes community service for troubled youth through the Parks and Recreation Department's At Risk Youth Division. He teaches kids the value of commitment, the importance of a strong work ethic and the need to follow through on assignments.*



- The Community and Economic Development Department assisted in bringing 17 new businesses to the city, which represented a capital investment of \$151 million and about 3,000 new jobs. Construction recently began on the first phase of the Phoenix Bioscience Center, a six-story bioscience research headquarters facility being built downtown.
- More than 700,000 youths participated in the city's 166 after-school recreation programs and 127 summer recreation programs.
- City employees raised more than \$1.1 million for our Community Service Fund Drive, collected more than 16,000 pounds of food and donated more than 700 units of blood.

As we look to the future, we will continue to focus on what is best for our community and how we can continue to make Phoenix better!

### **City Departments and Work Teams Exhibit Service Excellence**

Over the past year, several city departments and work teams received awards and recognition for their dedication to customer service and for achieving excellent results in their work objectives. Often efforts focus directly on the customer. At other times, services are indirect, such as through improved environmental conditions. Ultimately, the result is a higher level of satisfaction among all Phoenix residents. The following city departments or work teams have exhibited noteworthy accomplishments in their efforts regarding customer service.

- Phoenix Channel 11 was awarded this year's Beacon Award in the training category for "The SOAR Program," about airport security for airport-based employees. The channel was also a finalist in the talk show category for "On the Road at Arizona Falls," one of Councilman Greg Stanton's "On the Issues" shows. More than 600 professionals, representing municipalities from across the United States, participated in this year's competition. Only one winner and two finalists were selected in each category, so a Beacon Award places Phoenix 11 among the very best access television operations in the country.



*The 2003 Latino Institute featured many successes including a major conference that attracted hundreds of youths and adults, the 2003 Maricopa County C.A.S.A. Community Support Award, a "back-to-school" event and a series of community informational fairs.*

- The Personnel Department's Language Education and Diversity Sensitivity (LEADS) Program was selected as one of 50 semi-finalists for the coveted Innovations in American Government Award by the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University. The selection celebrates 50 of the most creative, forward thinking, results-driven government programs at the state, local, tribal and federal levels.
- For the seventh consecutive year, Arizona Business Magazine announced that Phoenix Civic Plaza was voted "most outstanding meeting and convention facility in Arizona." Civic Plaza is featured in the 2004 issue of "Ranking Arizona – The Best of Arizona Business." "Ranking Arizona" is the result of the largest business opinion poll taken in Arizona. More than 5,000 businesses in more than 200 different business and leisure categories were included in the voting. They based their selection on the quality of the facility, service and staff.
- The Neighborhood Services Department was awarded \$35,000 in the U.S. Conference of Mayors – DuPont Spotlight on Excellence Awards Competition. The award honors the department for developing effective strategies to make the city lead-safe. Since 1996, more than 700 lead-safe units have been developed for low-income families with children. With the award money, the city will be able to expand its lead-control services to an additional 8 to 15 single-family units or 10 to 20 multi-family units.



*Sgt. Mary Roberts is responsible for the city's AMBER Alert plan and response strategy. The plan details the criteria used to activate a response to a child abduction and the responsibilities of the operations center, police department and other community agencies. The plan has received national acclaim and has been requested by other states and the U.S. Justice Department.*

### **Employee Suggestions Streamline Operations and Cut Costs**

The Employee Suggestion Program (ESP), which began in the mid-1950s provides the city of Phoenix and its employees with a method for generating and sustaining continuous improvement. The financial awards and attention given to the program demonstrate to employees that city management values their input. As a result, employee suggestions submitted throughout the program save the city millions of dollars through direct cost savings and other productivity and cost avoidance improvements. Employees can make improvement suggestions for any city operation, not just for their own department. Some examples of employee suggestions awarded in the 2003-04 fiscal year are described in the following:

- The City Clerk Department implemented an automated agenda/packet distribution process of the Formal and Recessed City Council Agendas. This process completely streamlined the agenda distribution process, reduced labor and eliminated wasted paper. Over the first three months, the cost savings exceeded \$19,000.
- The Water Services Department adopted a suggestion to construct a new water main and use an existing area well and pump station to provide additional water for growth and a redundant supply to the Ahwatukee area. This idea replaced a consulting firm's recommendation and saved the city roughly \$7.4 million and eliminated approximately \$300,000 in future operating costs.
- The Police Department adopted a new procedure for making community notifications. The mailing process for notifications was streamlined and reduced costs for labor and postage. The new method will result in a first year's savings of more than \$8,000.
- The Event Communications Section of Civic Plaza reduced the number of phone lines utilized by clients and exhibitors. Without negatively impacting service demands or customer needs, the reduction in phone lines resulted in a first year's savings of approximately \$36,000.
- The creation of a partnership with Arizona State University's language program resulted in a city "in-service practicum" for qualified students enrolled in the translation certificate program. This resulted in cost savings by eliminating duplication of city translation services through external contracts. The cost savings to the Public Information Office and other city departments for the first year is estimated at \$38,000.

The city of Phoenix has become a leader throughout the world in delivering excellent municipal service. The reason for our success is the strong commitment by our employees to reach for excellence in all they do.